Proposal Title: A Search for 6.7 GHz Methanol Masers in M33

ABSTRACT:

We propose to carry out a search for analogs of Galactic methanol masers in M33. 6.6 GHz methanol masers are among the best tracers of the early stages of high-mass star formation in the Milky Way, and are the second brightest maser sources known. Yet no extragalactic methanol masers beyond the LMC/SMC have been discovered. If methanol masers in M33 follow the same distribution as exhibited by bright methanol masers in the Milky Way, we expect a substantial population to exist at \( \rho \leq 10 \text{ mJy} \). The 6 K/Jy sensitivity of Arecibo with the highly sensitive 6 to 8 GHz cooled receiver (\( T_{sys} < 30 \text{ K} \)), will allow us to achieve a \( 5\sigma \) sensitivity of 5 mJy in 1 hr integration time with 0.5 km s\(^{-1}\) velocity resolution. We propose to observe 25 of the giant molecular clouds in the central portion of M33 catalogued by Engargiola et al. (2003). Observing a significant fraction (about 40%) of the GMCs in the central portion of M33 should give us a reasonable probability of detecting several masers and could be the first step towards using these masers to trace high-mass star formation and studying the relationship between methanol masers and GMC mass in this SA galaxy.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul F. Goldsmith</td>
<td>Cornell University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:goldsmith@astro.cornell.edu">goldsmith@astro.cornell.edu</a></td>
<td>607 255 0606</td>
<td>no</td>
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Instrument Setup

Atmospheric Observation Instruments:

Special Equipment or setup: none
RFI Considerations

Frequency Ranges Planned

see proposal